

POLISH YOUTH ON THE EUROPEAN LABOUR MARKET

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Abstract: The starting point of this article is to attempt to analyze the current situation on the labor market in Europe. In order to characterize the European market the authors focused on the latest strategy called "Europe 2020" which aims to harmonize the functioning of the European market, to increase the competitiveness and productivity of the European economy by creating new jobs and higher standards of living. In the following part of the paper the authors present the new role of Polish universities. In this context, they have presented the skills and competencies of Polish graduates and university students as well as their chances of finding an interesting job in the EU.

Key words: European labour market, employment, work abroad, the standard of living, the European Union

Introduction

Today the motto "to work without borders" is neither surprising nor unusual. On the contrary, by living in the times of globalization, digitalization and rapidly developing new technologies, the fact of working in another country has become a standard practice for many people. The European labour market is not static and is subject to constant changes. Nowadays it has to face a new wave of globalization due to the changing needs of employers and employees. What is more, companies are developing new strategies to become more competitive and the employment policies of the European countries as well as the employment process in the European Union requires to be redesigned [3]. In order to create a greater number of better jobs, the EU member states are working to coordinate the employment strategy. The changes in this area should be achieved by 2020.

In addition to common goals, every country that belongs to the European Union should, at the national level, take the necessary measures to reduce the unemployment by achieving an increase of the employment and productivity [8]. Another problem that the contemporary European labour market needs to face concerns democratic and social changes. We cannot focus only on political and economic success of the member countries. The promotion of equal opportunities for men and women in their working life and the elimination of social inequality is becoming a very important aspect.

The research carried out by the experts from the European labour market associated with the organization Cedefop (a specialized agenda/organization of the European Union that leads a study on the trends on the European labour market. Cedefop is the common name. The abbreviation comes from French and means Centre Européen pour le Développement de la Formation Professionnelle.) shows

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that despite the constantly emerging new challenges on the labour market learning is the basic tool designating with success an individual life, helping to find a dream job, and to realize your career.

The strategy "Europe 2020"

"Labour migration is one of the most important issues concerning all the member states of the EU and at the very top of the political agenda".[5] The main aim of activities is: "an elimination of any direct or indirect discrimination based on nationality as regards employment, remuneration and other working conditions, access to flat and the right of an employee to reside in the country with their family".[5, p.6-7]

The economic and financial crisis that hit Europe which revealed the structural weaknesses of European economies and showed the functional defects of the European labour market, mobilized politicians to take action in order to construct a harmonized economy based on the principles common in all member states. In April 2009 was adopted a resolution entitled: "The conditions for the free movement of people: better protection of the employees and fair competition" drawn up by the European Trade Union Confederation. The resolution calls for "the full implementation of the principles of free movement in the context of fair competition and the introduction of additional measures at both national and European level. It also calls for the creation of a fair internal market combining open borders with an adequate protection of workers".[5, p.6-7]

On 17th June 2010 the European Council together with the heads of the European member states approved a new strategy of the European Union for a smart economy that supports employment and social inclusion - "Europe 2020" [8, accessed on: 13.03.2014]. As a consequence, with the help of these strategies Europe should politically catch up with rapidly changing economic situation, not only to overcome the financial crisis that has wiped out many plans but in particular, to improve the competitiveness and productivity of the European market by creating new jobs and higher standards of living.

The strategy "Europe 2020" focuses on five primary objectives concerning employment, research, climate, education, poverty and social exclusion. The objectives developed within "Europe 2020" strategy give dimension to the entire planned process of changes. They also give the possibility to turn them into national activities of member states and to match them to the specific situation in a given country.

These objectives are:

- "the employment rate for people aged 20-64 years should be at 75%;
- 3 % of EU GDP should be invested in research and development;
- it is obligatory to achieve the objectives of "20/20/20" in climate and energy (including the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions even by 30%, if the conditions allow);

- the percentage of early school leavers should be less than 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a university degree;
- the number of people at risk of poverty should be reduced by 20 million. "[7, accessed on: 14.03.2014]

The above mentioned priorities of the EU actions are not the only problems that the European economy faces, therefore, there have been developed projects that support and provide details of the "Europe 2020" programme. The Commission presented seven projects in which all the European Union member states will be involved in order to implement them [7, accessed on: 14.03.2014]:

- "The union of innovation" - aims to improve the funding of research and innovation. Owing to an easier access to financing, new ideas should turn into products or services which in turn will contribute to economic growth and job creation;
- "Youth on the move" - this project aims to improve the organization in education in such a way that it facilitates young people an entrance on the labour market;
- "European digital agenda" – as part of this action digital market will become homogenous and high speed internet will become widely accessible;
- "Europe efficiently using resources" - the project is to support efforts of using renewable energy resources, to modernize transport sector, and to promote the efficiency of energy;
- "An industrial policy in the era of globalization" - a project to improve business environment. It supports the development of strong industrial foundations that will be able to compete on the world market;
- "The programme for the support of new skills and employment" – the activities involved with this project are to modernize labour markets and to empower the position of citizens through the development of skills. The primary objective is also to increase labour activity and to match better the supply and demand on the labour market through the mobilization of the workforce;
- "European platform against poverty" - provides a decent life thanks to the benefits flowing from economic growth and employment. These benefits should be widely available in order to reduce poverty and to ensure to all people an active participation in the society.

These projects are linked with each other and are in synergy with the goals of the European Union.

In order to achieve success of the intended projects the interrelated markets from the countries that belong to the Community work closely with each other. Member states should support each other in activities, make available the results of such steps to each others, aim to facilitate the movement of services and goods while at the same time enforce the rules of a homogenous market thereby increasing the confidence of individual consumers and supporting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

What chance of finding job in the times of new changes and challenges that the EU market is facing do the Polish graduates have? (The authors of this article have attempted to present the situation of Polish youth on the European labour market. The problem has been presented in a very limited scope due to the limitations of publishing.)

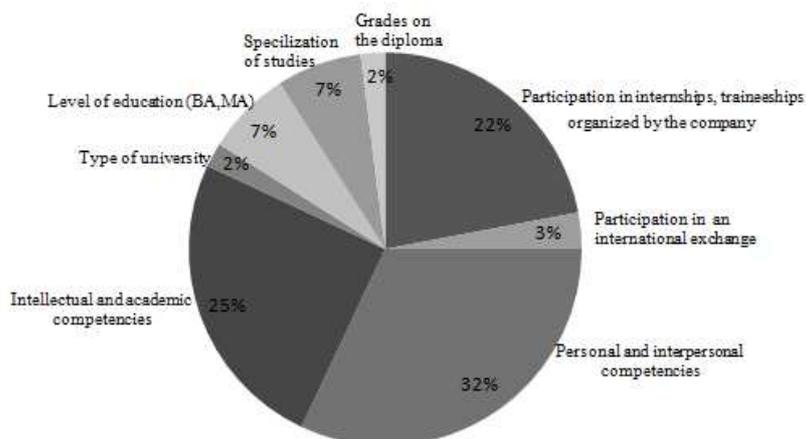
Work internationally - an opportunity for graduates of the Polish universities

Globalization also affected Poland and has become present in almost every area of life bringing great challenges but also opportunities which can be used, first of all, by the young Polish people.

Globalization has helped to redefine the objectives of universities and to unify the European Higher Education Area. The reforms introduced in higher education are aimed to adapt them to the requirements of the modern, local, and international economic environment. The introduction of changes in the policy of higher education management, opening universities on the reality of the market, linking culture with higher education, pursuing not only the traditional functions of education, i.e. education but also the development of European values, ethical attitudes, leads to the development of mentality and awareness of students. Now they are actively participating in political projects, use their right for realizing personal life plans, striving to achieve their success. Positive career development of every citizen strengthens national economy, improves the standard of living, and develops the awareness and culture of the society.

The trips on internships abroad, the participation in student exchanges, in the "Erasmus" project, a wide range of scholarships opened Polish students onto Europe, on the world, giving them a sense of "belonging to Europe". More and more graduates from Polish universities apply to work abroad. There is a great number of interesting job offers in various European countries (See.e.g.: www.jobboerse.de, www.jobkralle.at, www.adg.be, www.eures.gov.pl) but the requirements for candidates are high. The main graduate skills that are valued by the employer include effective communication, a wide knowledge of foreign languages, organization of work, an ability to work in a team, having a desire to learn, mobility, and intercultural competences.

In 2012 a study was conducted to analyze the competences and qualifications necessary for a successful recruitment procedure for various positions (The research was conducted by the School of Economics, the American Chamber of Commerce in Poland and Ernst & Young with the participation of students from the Student Consulting Research at SGH. The study was conducted in 53 companies every second company employs from 50 to 250 people). There were quality surveys carried out in Polish and foreign companies. The results of the survey showed that employers seek in the person applying for the job not only knowledge but personal predispositions. The most important criterion used by **companies during the recruitment of graduates** (N = 53)



Source: [2]

The experiment conducted among employers helped to specify as many as thirteen attributes of an ideal candidate:

Table 1. The competences of an "ideal" graduate (according to the responses to open-ended questions)

Position according to the number of indications	Types of competencies*	Number of indications
1	Effective communication	13
2	Openness on learning and continuous development	10
3	Activity and engagement in the job	9
4	Flexibility and ability to adapt	7
5-6	Ability to work in a team	6
5-6	Knowledge of foreign languages (especially English)	6
7-10	Aiming to achieve results	4
7-10	Responsibility	4
7-10	Ability to formulate and solve problems	4
7-10	Ability to use information technology tools	4
11-13	Initiative	3
11-13	Analytical abilities	3
11-13	Industry knowledge	3

Source: [2]

Polish graduates meet the expectations of employers in Europe in terms of education, commitment to work, and personal competences and therefore they use

more and more the right to free flow of workers and try to find work in the EU. Right after graduation, of course without a work permit, they are more likely to find work in their profession and the salary offered is much higher than in Poland. For example, Norwegian market is open all the time to outside experts and they seek engineers and educators. In Denmark they have created special institutions helping graduates to find a job that would give them satisfaction [9, accessed on: 15.03.2014]. For Polish students and graduates an attractive labour market is also in the Netherlands, Germany, England, and Austria.

The European Union institutions offer graduates interesting jobs, training opportunities and participation in work placements (General information concerning work in EU can be found on the website: http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/index_de.htm). One of the basic conditions for applying for internships or training offered by the EU authorities is a very good knowledge of English. The knowledge of German or French is not required but makes daily work easier. European institutions give an opportunity for candidates to pursue a career in Europe after completing an internship or practice. Since 2010 on the EU website appear competitions for graduates and students from all the EU member states (Information concerning work for students and graduates can be found on the website: <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.traineeships> or <http://europa.eu/epsa/>).

The European Union market offers job not only to engineers, economists, lawyers, doctors or other professionals. Those who want to develop themselves scientifically will also find interesting offers. Researchers have an opportunity to study or work in another Member State and can benefit from the European Job Mobility Portal for scientists and researchers. A new website - "EURAXESS - Researchers in Motion" - presents a wide range of career opportunities for researchers. This is a free portal which provides a comprehensive and up-to-date information on job vacancies and funding opportunities in all areas of research in Europe. The home page also serves as a first point of information about your rights, scientific laws, and research funding in the EU.

Summary

Polish graduates are having more and more chances of finding jobs in the EU member states on positions they dream of. The European Commission runs a number of programmes to help find the right position for mobile workers informing them about educational opportunities, practices, trainings and job offers across Europe. The transition from student life to professional life in other member states is not something unattainable today. The desire to work in another member state for many Polish people is more often becoming a reality.

Polish students should be aware that Polish universities do not differ from Europe by giving them a good education and creating in them a positive attitude of the European citizen. Graduates should believe in their abilities and more often use the opportunities offered by membership in the European Union.

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POLSKA MŁODZIEŻ NA EUROPEJSKIM RYNKU PRACY

Streszczenie: Punktem wyjścia niniejszego artykułu jest próba analizy obecnej sytuacji na rynku pracy w Europie. W celu scharakteryzowania rynku europejskiego autorzy skupili się na najnowszej strategii zwanej "Europa 2020", która ma na celu harmonizację funkcjonowania rynku europejskiego, w celu zwiększenia konkurencyjności i produktywności europejskiej gospodarki poprzez stworzenie nowych miejsc pracy i podniesienie standardów życia. W dalszej części artykułu autorzy przedstawiają nową rolę polskich uczelni wyższych. W tym kontekście, zaprezentowali umiejętności i kompetencje polskich absolwentów i studentów wyższych uczelni, a także ich szanse na znalezienie ciekawej pracy w UE.

Słowa kluczowe: Europejski rynek pracy, zatrudnienie, praca za granicą, standard życia, Unia Europejska.

波兰青年对欧洲劳动力市场

摘要: 这篇文章的起始点是，试图分析在欧洲在劳动力市场上的当前情况。为了描绘作者的称为 '欧洲 2020'，目的是协调统一的欧洲市场，通过创造新的就业机会和更高的生活水平提高的竞争力和生产力的欧洲经济运作的最新战略重点在欧洲市场。在文件的以下部分中，作者目前波兰大学的新作用。在这方面，他们提出的技能和波兰毕业生和大学学生的能力以及他们在欧盟中寻找有趣的工作的机会。

关键词: 欧洲劳动力市场、就业、出国、工作标准的生活，欧洲联盟。。